



## Background

Route 66 is one of the most renowned highways in the world. Established in 1927 and decommissioned in 1985, Route 66 like many other historic highways, served as a dramatic transformative agent, playing a critical role in defining the American culture and economy. Through song, literature, film, and television, Route 66 has been elevated to iconic status, and has become an immortal symbol of American history and values.

To address public concerns about the commemoration and preservation of Route 66, the US Congress passed Public Law 106-45 in 1999 to create the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Act. The Act called for the creation a program to help set priorities and precedents for the preservation of Route 66 historic resources, and to provide grants and technical assistance for these purposes. In addition to preserving a national symbol, the initiative would help to stimulate Route 66 businesses and economic growth in the 30 congressional districts across the eight states through which the route passes. A majority of these districts include rural communities in need of economic enrichment, which historic preservation and heritage tourism helps to facilitate.

The National Park Service Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program was established in 2001 to fulfill the intent of the Act, and in 2004 the program completed its fourth year of operations. The program is scheduled to legislatively terminate in 2009, at which time it is anticipated that a non-federal entity will assume the responsibilities of the program, or the program will be reauthorized. A summary of the program's primary accomplishments for 2004 are as follows:

## Partnerships

To accomplish its goals, the program has dedicated itself to building partnerships with local, state, federal, and tribal governments; nonprofit organizations; private business and property owners; and other invested stakeholders. In 2004, program staff held over 60 community and individual meetings, and/or presentations. These meetings have resulted in enthusiastic and valuable input related to the identification and prioritization of preservation needs, and has helped to mobilize community involvement in the protection and commemoration of Route 66 resources.

## Clearinghouse Functions

The Program serves as a point of contact for Route 66 preservation information. Information is disseminated through many means as defined by the program's publicity and public outreach plan. All information provided is intended to address the unique needs of historic highways and Route 66. Specific accomplishments include:

- Management of program website
- Development of library of Route 66 and preservation- related materials
- Fulfillment of numerous public information and networking requests
- Production of annual newsletter, brochures, special reports, resource directory
- Initial planning of a inventory database
- Initial development of Historic Route 66 National Register of Historic Places Travel Itinerary



**Top: Historic postcard**

**Middle: Road alignment east of Flagstaff, Arizona**

**Bottom: Chippewa Motel, Saint Louis, Missouri**

## Technical Assistance

Program staff provided limited technical assistance through approximately 20 site visits. Technical assistance included cursory building inspections, treatment advice, project concept development, and interpretive wayside development.

## Cost-Share Grant Assistance

The program provides cost- share assistance to eligible projects to help preserve priority properties of the historic corridor. Funding assistance is also provided to a lesser degree for research, oral history, interpretation, and educational purposes.

- 28 eligible cost- share grant applications were received, representing a total of \$685,799 in requested funding assistance
- 13 projects were awarded \$121,184 in available grant funds
- 40 cost- share grant projects were managed, including new and ongoing projects

## Other Activities

- Nominations were accepted for the creation of a Federal Advisory Council. The role of the advisory committee will be to provide a forum for diverse interests to discuss issues and advise the National Park Service on program matters and Route 66 preservation priorities
- A National Route 66 Historic Context Statement was prepared, which will serve as a master document for the subsequent nomination of approximately 50 properties to the National Register of Historic Places.

Overall, the program continues to make strides in raising awareness about the history and significance of Route 66, and in assisting communities and individuals with realizing the benefits of preserving and promoting the route. The program is providing stimulus for the preservation of numerous historic Route 66 properties, which in turn will serve as viable businesses, museums, tourist attractions, and renewed points of pride within the communities.



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program  
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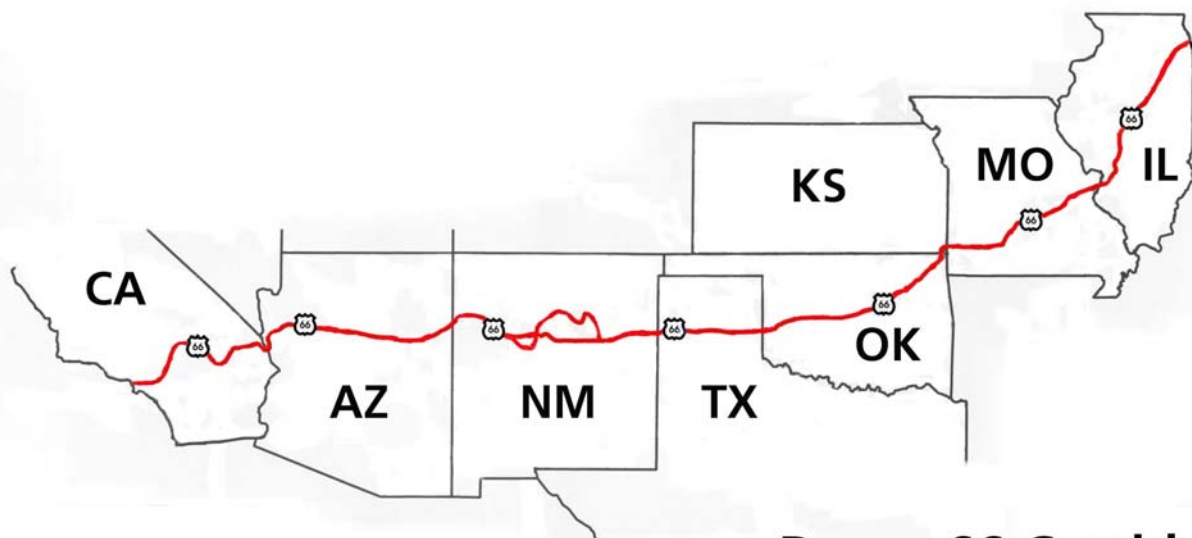
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**Route 66 Corridor**